

Mint of the United States at Philadelphia,

MELTING AND REFINING DEPARTMENT,

Philadelphia, 13th May —, 1880.

Sir,

Referring to my former communications on zinc of 17 April and 3 May, I respectfully report that we have since tested six other plates of spelter, with the same general results, that some exhibit much and others little content of lead, and one showed the presence of arsenic. Upon retesting one of the samples, which had showed a more moderate quantity of lead, Mr Eckfeldt found, in the piece cut off, a lump of lead melted in the plate of spelter, but not alloyed with the zinc. Further examination showed another piece of lead recognised by a cut with the knife. The fact that every plate examined contained lead, and that in some the presence of lead is indicated in separate lumps, so that the assay of a slip from a single slab gives no clue to the character of the whole slab, — and the fact that

that we have found serious losses of silver by the volatilization of zinc in the melting pot, which zinc was prevented from solution by the presence of the lead, — these two facts should at once condemn the whole lot of spelter, as detrimental to the interests of the Government for use in refining.

Those who sold us the spelter are certainly not blameworthy, for it appeared externally to be of good quality, and the lumps of lead found in it might well elude the merchant, when it has required long research to discover the fact, entirely new in our experience, that lumps of lead may be disseminated in spelter without being alloyed with it.

As we are very much behind in our Refining, I solicit your earliest attention to this subject in order to the closure of our accounts for the year.

Very respectfully yours

J. C. Booth

Hon. A. Loudon Snowden

Superintendent

m & R

468 1/2

U. S. Mint, Melter and Refiner's Department,
PHILADELPHIA, PENN.,

May 13, 1880.

Jas. L. Booth
Melter and Refiner.

Again reports
the impurities of the
Spelter on hand and
account of the
presence of lead.

No. of Enclosures,

Rec May 13th 1880.

[Abstract:] Again reports the unfitness of the spelter... 468 ½

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